UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
PRODUCTION AND MARKETING ADMINISTRATION
INFORMATION BRANCH
641 WASHINGTON ST., ROOM 956
NEW YORK 14, N. Y.

AGRICULTURAL MARKETING

(Script No. 15.....For Use During The Period January 5---18, 1948)

PART I: ----- CULLING POULTRY TO SAVE GRAIN (PP 1- 8)

PART II: ----- MEAT SUPPLIES AND GRAIN CONSERVATION (PP 8-14)

PART I: ----- CULLING POULTRY TO SAVE GRAIN (7½ minutes)

ANN: The marketing of America's food is of direct concern to everyone --- farmer, distributor and consumer. Today, Station _____presents another in a series of broadcasts designed to tell farm and city people more about the latest developments in the field of agricultural marketing..... Last November poultry producers joined in a pledge to cull their laying flocks heavily in order to help save grain for overseas relief. Today we've asked to our studios _____of the Production and Marketing Administration to bring us up-to-date on the progress of this campaign.... As I recall, _____, poultrymen promised to bring the nation's laying flocks down to 400 million birds by the first of the year. But, according to a recent report by the head of the National Poultry Producers' Federation, Herman C. Demme, it looks like they've missed that goal by a pretty wide margin.

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A G R I C U L T U R A L M A R K E T I N G

(Script No. 15 ... for use During The Period
January 5 --12, 1948)

PART I: ----- QUILLING POULTRY TO SAVE GRAIN (PP 1-6)

PART II: ----- MEAT SUPPLIES AND GRAIN CONSERVATION (PP 7-14)

PART I: ----- QUILLING POULTRY TO SAVE GRAIN (14 minutes)

ANN: The marketing of America's food is of direct concern to everyone --- farmer, distributor and consumer. Today, Station _____ presents another in a series of broadcasts designed to tell farm and city people more about the latest developments in the field of agricultural marketing.... Last November poultry producers joined in a pledge to quill their laying flocks heavily in order to help save grain for overseas relief. Today we're asked to our studios _____ of the Production and Marketing Administration to bring us up-to-date on the progress of this campaign.... Am'I right, _____? poultrymen promised to bring the nation's laying flocks down to 500 million birds by the first of the year. But, according to a recent report by the head of the National Poultry Producers' Federation, Norman G. Deem, it looks like they've missed that goal by a pretty wide margin.

PMA: I'm afraid that's right, _____. Mr. Demme, you know, is also chairman of the Poultry Coordinating Committee under the Voluntary Food Conservation Program. He pointed out that in November...except in the South...poultrymen were actually culling fewer birds from their laying flocks than they did in the same month last year.

ANN: What that means, then, is that poultrymen are going to have to redouble their efforts if the grain saving program is to be a success on poultry farms.

PMA: Since the campaign has lagged so badly up to now we've had to revise our goals somewhat. What we're working toward now is the removal of some 65 million older hens and inefficient layers between Christmas and February 1.

ANN: What would that bring the national laying flock down to?

PMA: Under normal conditions culling at that rate would leave 380 million layers on farms by the first of next month.

ANN: With feed prices as high as they are it would seem to be good business for farmers to work toward making their flocks more efficient.

PMA: Well, as poultry specialists point out, egg producers are faced with a period of heavy egg production and prices that will drop seasonally. With all the urgent demands for grain throughout the world there doesn't seem to be much chance that feed prices are going to become any more favorable to poultry and egg farmers than they are now.

FMA: I'm afraid that's right, _____. Mr. Damme, you know, is also chairman of the Poultry Coordinating Committee under the Voluntary Food Conservation Program. He pointed out that in November, except in the South, poultrymen were actually culling fewer birds from their laying flocks than they did in the same month last year.

AMW: What that means, then, is that poultrymen are going to have to redouble their efforts if the grain saving program is to be a success on poultry farms.

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FMA: Well, as poultry specialists point out, egg producers are faced with a period of heavy egg production and prices that will drop seasonally. With all the urgent demands for grain throughout the world there doesn't seem to be much chance - that feed prices are going to become any more favorable to poultry and egg farmers than they are now.

ANN: Since feed is a poultryman's major cost item he's just going to have to keep his flock at peak efficiency in order to compete.

PMA: That's right. And the first step is to weed out the "star boarders".....those birds which aren't producing at all. After that he should go after the low-producing birds --- those that may be laying an egg once in a while but aren't earning their keep with today's high feed prices.

ANN: And the smart producer won't stop there either. He's got to keep a constant check on his flock to make sure that every pound of feed gets results.

PMA: Exactly, _____. One good rule for a poultry producer to follow is to see that he gets at least half an egg a day for every bird in the flock.

ANN: That would be quite a trick. I haven't seen the bird yet that can lay only half an egg at a time. But what you mean, of course, is that out of any good flock of 100 birds the producer should be able to count on at least 50 eggs. Is that it?

PMA: That's it in an eggshell. If a flock isn't producing at that rate then there must be some laggards in it who are taking a free ride --- just running up the feed bill.

ANN: I read recently that poultry specialists in the Department of Agriculture have figured that for every five-cent drop in the price of eggs as we move into the flush production season the poultryman should get at least one extra egg a month from every bird.

ANN: Since feed is a poultryman's major cost item he's just going to have to keep his ribbon at peak efficiency in order to compete.

MAX: That's right. And the first step is to weed out the "water boarders"....those birds which aren't producing at all. After that he should go after the low-producing birds --- those that may be laying an egg once in a while but aren't earning their keep with today's high feed prices.

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MAX: Exactly. _____. One good rule for a poultry producer to follow is to see that he gets at least half an egg a day for every bird in the flock.

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ANN: I read recently that poultry specialists in the Department of Agriculture have figured that for every five-cent drop in the price of eggs as we move into the flush production season the poultryman should get at least one extra egg

PMA: At present feed prices that's what would be needed. And it doesn't pay a producer to cut his cost by feeding his flock less. The best way is to get rid of the low-producing birds and feed those that remain generously. Otherwise egg production is going to fall off. One of the best ways of cutting down costs while helping to conserve scarce grain is to work toward a flock in which there are four pullets to every hen.

ANN: Sort of an "accent on youth", _____.

PMA: That's right. Poultry specialists in the Department have a lot of trap-nesting records and they find that a flock made up of nothing but young pullets uses less feed per bird. Not only that but pullets produce an average of 20 to 30 more eggs per year than old hens do.

ANN: I've heard it said that the increased rate of lay from farm poultry flocks in recent years has been due to a great extent to the higher proportion of pullets in these flocks.

PMA: Actually the increased rate of lay in the past few years has been in almost direct proportion to the increased percentage of pullets in the national laying flock... You see, even farm poultry flocks are taking on a "new look."

ANN: From what you've said, though, _____, it would seem that giving the new look to laying flocks is a lot less expensive to the poutltryman than giving the new look to his womenfolk.

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WMA: Actually the increased rate of lay in the past few years has been in almost direct proportion to the increased percentage of pullets in the national laying flock... You see, even farm poultry flocks are taking on a "new look."

AMW: From what you've said, though, _____, it would seem that giving the new look to laying flocks is a lot less expensive to the poultryman than giving the new look to his wardrobe.

PMA: That's a fact, _____. By getting flocks to the point where they are made up exclusively of pullets farmers will be saving themselves lots of money in these days of high feed costs and at the same time they'll be helping the industry meet its pledge of saving millions of bushels of grain that can be used to feed hungry people in other countries.

ANN: So the urgent message that we want to get across to every poultryman listening in today can be wrapped up in one word .....'CULL'..... Take out of the laying flock all the old hens and inefficient producers.

PMA: That's right, _____. "Culling" has to be the watch-word in the poultry industry these days. But the program doesn't stop there. Culling the laying flock on the farm is only the first step in this campaign.

ANN: The second step, then, is to get the hens to market..... and that's where the wholesale and retail distributors come in.

PMA: Exactly. If we reach the goal of 380 million layers on farms by February 1 that's going to mean that all these culled hens will be coming to market in a relatively short period of time.

ANN: That means we'll need a big push on fowl in retail markets during that period.

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ANN: That means we'll need a big push on Tuesdays in retail markets during that period.

PMA: Right, _____. What we're driving at is getting every family in the country to eat a hen a week. Retail markets which are cooperating in this drive are giving an extra selling push to these heavier chickens and they'll keep on doing it for as long as necessary. But one weekend is being set aside to give the program a really intensive promotion.....that's the weekend of January 15 to 17.

ANN: During that time consumers I suppose can expect to find these heavy birds featured prominently in their retail stores.

PMA: That's the idea. The consumer is the final link in this poultry culling drive. All during this period she's being asked to eat more of these heavy chickens --- and, if she has the facilities, to can and freeze some of them for later use when poultry supplies may be tighter.

ANN: With red meat supplies expected to be short of demand for some time to come the big supply of heavy chickens these days should be very welcome to the average homemaker.

PMA: Right, and that's why the poultry industry and the Department are using every possible method of letting consumers know just how useful these supplies can be in menu planning at this time. The gals at the Bureau of Human Nutrition and Home Economics are putting out a lot of material designed to let homemakers know just how good these birds are for many meals. You've heard of the "Peace Plate", haven't you?

ANN: Who hasn't? That's the daily menu suggestion that is put out in connection with the Food Conservation drive and circulated all over the country.

PMA: That's right. Well, the Peace Plate for January 18---- that's right after this big weekend promotion of the 15th to 17th --- is going to feature these heavier, meatier birds. A lot of women have the idea that these culled fowl can only be used for stewing. That's all wrong. They make swell fricassee chicken and I know from personal experience that they really are wonderful when they are baked or made into a chicken salad. But any good cook will know lots of ways to make a tasty meal from this sort of fowl.

ANN: From what I understand these culled fowl are especially good for cooking because they are so meaty.

PMA: That's an important point. A chicken that is a very efficient egg layer is likely to be quite thin and scrawny. That's because it uses so much of its feed to produce high quality eggs. On the other hand, the loafer in the laying flock turns more of its feed into meat and so makes a plump and desirable meal. That's another reason why it's a good idea for consumers to buy more of these heavy stewing or baking chickens at this time.

ANN: Well, _____, I think that just about brings us up-to-date on the poultry culling drive.....

(USE FOLLOWING CLOSE IF PART I IS USED AS A SEPARATE SCRIPT.)

ANN: .....It seems our time is about up. Thanks a lot for being with us today, _____, of the Production and Marketing Administration for another in our series of broadcasts on agricultural marketing.....Friends, this has been another public service broadcast by Station _____, brought to you with the cooperation of the United States Department of Agriculture.

PART II: ----- MEAT SUPPLIES AND GRAIN CONSERVATION (7½ Minutes)

(USE FOLLOWING INTRODUCTION IF PART II IS USED AS A SEPARATE SCRIPT.)

ANN: The marketing of America's food is of direct concern to everyone --- farmer, distributor and consumer. Today Station _____ presents another in a series of broadcasts designed to tell farm and city people more about the latest developments in the field of agricultural marketing....Our guest today is a man who is well known to all of our regular listeners, _____, of the Production and Marketing Administration.....

ANN: .....With our short feed supplies facing continued high demand both at home and abroad it seems pretty certain that Americans can look forward to smaller meat supplies during this year than we had in 1947. I think it would be a good idea, _____, if you would give us a round-up picture of what these reduced meat supplies and the grain conservation campaign will mean to livestock producers and consumers.

PMA: Well, as you say, _____, we can count on having less meat this year than last.....both because of smaller feed grain supplies and fewer livestock. The Bureau of Agricultural Economics estimates that meat production this year will be about one and a half billion pounds under last year. That will mean about 10 pounds less per person than we ate in 1947.

ANN: And it's quite a bit less than we ate during the war years too, isn't it?

PMA: No, 146 pounds per person is more than we had during all the war years but one, and it's quite a bit above the average consumption before the war. The point is, though, that with consumer incomes continuing at a high level there will be less meat on the market than people want to buy.

ANN: So from that point of view we can say that meat supplies will be short. How about taking a quick survey of the prospects for the various types of meat --- beef, pork, and lamb?

PMA: Well, according to the BAE we can expect less meat in total than last year all through 1948. However, for the first nine months of the year most of the reduction will come in beef. There's a sharp drop in the number of cattle that are being fed for market this winter.

ANN: According to a recent report which I read, shipments of stocker and feeder cattle into the Corn Belt States are running way under a year ago.

PMA: That's right, _____. In November, for example, these shipments were running at about 25% less than in November 1946 ---- as a matter of fact, these were the smallest shipments into the Corn Belt for that month since 1940. During the coming year a lot less cattle are going to be grain fed for market. Feeder cattle are expensive these days and so are corn and other feeds. So most farmers aren't going to be too anxious to grain feed these animals for market.

ANN: Well, that means that we'll be seeing more short-fed cattle this year. And that will fit right in with the Department of Agriculture's recommendations in the grain conservation campaign.

PMA: That's quite right. Less grain feeding means less choice meat on retail markets. The grain conservation campaign calls for feeding more cattle to the slaughter grade of good rather than choice. And it now seems quite likely that we will see extensive marketings of cattle after only 60 to 120 days on feed.

ANN: That should make quite a difference in the amount of higher grade beef since the normal Corn Belt feeding period runs about 200 days. However, with today's high feed prices it would seem to be good business for farmers to feed cattle to lighter weights.

PMA: It is, _____. According to some Department estimates "good" grade beef will bring generally higher returns per dollar of feed cost than "choice" grade. So most livestock producers will find it profitable to follow the Department's recommendations in cutting down grain feeding.

ANN: Let's look for a moment now at the outlook for pork and lamb.

PMA: You'll find somewhat the same story here. According to the latest BAE report on farmer's breeding intentions, the number of sows that will farrow this spring will be 11 percent under last year. That would be the smallest number of spring farrowings since 1938. It will mean that the latter part of this year will see lower pork production than during the same period in 1947.

ANN: But it doesn't necessarily mean that pork production will be down during the early part of the year, does it?

PMA: No, there may not be much change in pork output early in the year. As a matter of fact it's likely that almost as many hogs will be slaughtered throughout the year as were killed in 1947. However, because of high feed costs and the grain conservation program, it's probable that hogs will be slaughtered at lighter weights than last year.

ANN: So for the year as a whole we'll probably have less pork on the market.

PMA: That's right, _____. With present feed prices it's likely to be no more profitable to put extra finish on hogs than it would be to feed cattle to higher grades. At any likely set of prices for hogs and corn, the last 25 pounds of finish on a 250 pound hog will bring farmers less profit per dollar of feed costs than if he sells the same hog at 225 pounds.

ANN: And what about lamb prospects.....to round out the picture?

PMA: Here again the indications are that there will be sharply reduced feeding operations this winter ----- According to the December 1 report, lamb feeding in the United States will be the lowest since 1929.

ANN: Well with lamb and mutton production in 1947 the smallest in eighteen years, that means we won't have have many lamb chops in 1948.

PMA: A lot of stock sheep have been slaughtered for market during the past few months. As you probably know this drop in sheep numbers isn't just peculiar to this period. Breeding sheep numbers have been dropping ever since 1942. And there's no change in sight for 1948.

ANN: What you've said about all three types of meat seems to add up to continued high meat prices this year.

PMA: That's the outlook. Exceptionally strong consumer demand during 1947 raised the price of meat and meat animals to record levels. And this demand is expected to continue strong, at least during the first half of this year. Even if it drops during the latter part of the year it doesn't seem probable that meat prices during all of 1948 will average any lower than they were last year.

ANN: Where do meat exports fit into the picture, _____?

PMA: They don't figure very large at all, _____. For the first three months of this year, for example, the total export allocation only adds up to about a quarter of one percent of our expected production.

ANN: That certainly shouldn't affect the market situation very seriously.

PMA: No, exports take only a very minor part of our total meat production. The biggest export demand for American food continues to be concentrated on grain. Penny for penny grain is the cheapest food for hungry nations, and from our point of view it's the easiest food to handle and ship. Of course, with grain supplies as short as they are now it's likely that we'll see more emphasis on some other items like dried eggs, dried fruit, and canned goods --- but even so grain will continue to be needed for shipment overseas. That's why it's so important that the grain conservation campaign be a success --- and that producers continue to cut down on grain feeding to livestock.

ANN: Well, this trend that you've been speaking about --- the trend toward marketing cattle and hogs at lighter weights --- should help to make large savings in grain.

PMA: Yes it should, _____. If farmers were to go all-out on the grain saving suggestions that have been made by the Department of Agriculture, it's estimated that we could save almost 350 million bushels of grain right on the farm this year. For example, if cattle were finished to "good" rather than "choice" grade we could save almost 50 million bushels right there. And other large savings can be made in hog feeding and poultry feeding.

ANN: And in many cases, as you've pointed out --- saving grain in livestock production can actually result in lower costs to farmers.

PMA: That's right. With present high feed costs, grain conservation on the farm can save farmerss money. But just as important --- by saving grain in this country we can help insure that the hungry democracies in Europe and Asia on which we are counting so heavily will not collapse because of a lack of food. And that can mean a great deal to the peace of the world and the security of this country.

ANN: I think we can all agree with you there, _____. Thanks very much for being with us today on another in our series of broadcasts on agricultural marketing..... Friends you have been listening to an interview with _____ of the Production and Marketing Administration. This public service presentation of Station _____ has been brought to you with the cooperation of the United States Department of Agriculture. ##########